The creation of quality jobs will remain a major challenge for almost all economies well beyond 2015.

Sustainable development goal number 8 focuses on the promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work opportunities for all people, in all countries.
What is the Samoa One-UN YEP?

The Samoa One United Nations Youth Employment Programme (One-UN YEP) aims to address in a holistic manner, the challenges of youth unemployment. This three-year programme is the result of a partnership between the Government of Samoa, through the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD), and five United Nations (UN) agencies combining technical expertise to deliver better and more efficient results (Delivering as One or One-UN approach).

Partnering UN agencies include: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV). The programme activities are aligned with the National Youth Policy 2016 – 2020 and the National Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020.

What are the challenges that the programme is addressing?

In Samoa, the youth unemployment rate is 16.4 per cent. This is almost double the national unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent.1

Despite generally good attainments in education, approximately two thirds (63%) of youth not in school remain economically inactive. And a large proportion of the remaining third are engaged in the informal economy,2 which is characterised by irregular and low income, sometimes unsafe working conditions and usually an absence of legal protection or social benefits.

Some of the specific challenges faced by youth in Samoa in securing employment include:

1. Accessing information about employment opportunities;
2. Access to financing support;
3. Skills development and relevant job opportunities;
4. Insufficient technical and entrepreneurial skills to exploit market opportunities.

Strategic focus

Building on the successes and lessons learned from the T.A.L.A.V.O.U project 2004 – 2010, the programme will focus on two strategic objectives:

1 Improving the Employability of Youth

- Closing the gap between labour market demand for skills and the supply from education and training providers.
- Improving the quality of labour market intermediation for youth and strengthening coordination and linkages between public and private employment service providers.
- Improving youth access to relevant technical and practical skills development programmes to better support their income generating initiatives.
- Life skills programme for young job-seekers to better prepare them for employment as well as sustainability of their income generating initiatives.

2 Youth entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise development

- Creating a ‘Small Business Incubator for Youth’. The incubation process will stimulate youth entrepreneurship and prepare start-up initiatives for survival and growth in a competitive marketplace.
- Implementing an innovative approach to ensure equal access and opportunity for rural youth.
- Promoting the development of socially responsible and environmentally friendly ‘green’ micro-enterprises across four sectors: agriculture, tourism, creative industries and conservation / climate change adaptation.
- Empowering youth led-micro-enterprises with informal status to grow and thrive in a competitive marketplace.

Creating partnerships to maximize impact

Partnerships are crucial for the success of the One-UN YEP. The programme will develop strategic alliances with a range of public, private and non-state actors engaging in youth employment related initiatives.

Partnerships will be with villages and youth themselves, financial service providers, vocational skills training organisations, grant funding mechanisms, technical specialists (e.g. agri-processing), small business development advisors, labour market intermediaries, public sector programmes (e.g. environment and climate change), and private sector initiatives. Partnerships with regional actors will promote the exchange of skills and knowledge.

By pursuing an integrated approach across sectors, the programme will create synergies that will add value to existing activities, maximize the use of local knowledge and available financial resources, and enhance the positive impact on youth employment in both rural and urban areas.

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2 Youth Employment in Samoa: A Situation Analysis. ILO. Sept 2015